

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[ ] Public or [X] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Rebecca Myers

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Westminster Academy

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 5601 North Federal Highway

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Fort Lauderdale State FL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 33308-2626

County Broward State School Code Number\* \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone 954-771-4615 Fax 954-771-4616

Web site/URL http://www.wacad.edu E-mail westminster@wacad.edu

Twitter Handle @wacad Facebook Page http://facebook.com/walions Google+ http://google.com

YouTube/URL http://youtube.com Blog http://www.wacad.edu/news Other Social Media Link \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* \_\_\_\_\_

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr.,

E-mail: jml@tka.net

Other)

District Name Palm Beach County School District Tel. NA

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Brian MacClugage

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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**Include this page in the school’s application as page 2.**

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state’s AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2013-2014 school year and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2008 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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All data are the most recent year available.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
 Middle/Junior high schools  
 High schools  
 K-12 schools
- TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- ☐ Urban or large central city  
☒ Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area  
☐ Suburban  
☐ Small city or town in a rural area  
☐ Rural
3.  Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	45	36	81
K	16	23	39
1	27	19	46
2	25	30	55
3	16	23	39
4	22	17	39
5	22	31	53
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
Total Students	173	179	352

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 3 % Asian
  - 12 % Black or African American
  - 10 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 72 % White
  - 3 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2012 - 2013 year: 5%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the school year	9
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	13
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	262
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.050
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %  
11 Total number ELL  
 Number of non-English languages represented: 4  
 Specify non-English languages: Spanish, Russian, Hungarian, Portuguese
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 0

If this method is not an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

9. Students receiving special education services: 15 %  
41 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

0 Autism	3 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deafness	11 Other Health Impaired
0 Deaf-Blindness	1 Specific Learning Disability
0 Emotional Disturbance	10 Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impairment	0 Traumatic Brain Injury
0 Mental Retardation	1 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
14 Multiple Disabilities	0 Developmentally Delayed

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	4
Classroom teachers	19
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals	22
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Daily student attendance	95%	98%	98%	97%	98%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2013

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes\_ No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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Westminster Academy's Lower School has a comprehensive and clearly stated mission and philosophy of education. The school's mission statement reads as follows: Westminster Academy is a Christ-centered, biblically-based college preparatory school dedicated to equipping covenant students to excel by using their gifts and talents for God's glory. The philosophy of education aligns with the mission and addresses the meaning of true education, the learner and the learning process. Westminster Academy exists to serve parents and their children by providing a high quality, biblically-based educational and instructional program marked by academic excellence, respect for the individual and personal service. There is strong evidence that the mission statement is clearly understood and enthusiastically embraced by the entire school community. Faculty and administration are committed to making Westminster Academy a school that provides the rare blend of academic excellence and spiritual vitality.

Established in 1971, Westminster Academy's Lower School is accredited by AdvancEd, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, National Council for Private School Accreditation and Christian Schools of Florida and serves families from as far south as Dade County and as far north as Palm Beach County. Enrollment for the 2013-2014 school year is 958 students, 352 of which are enrolled in grades prekindergarten through five.

The school's main campus, located on a 15-acre site, provides lower school students with a dedicated lower school computer lab, music room, art room, gymnasium, dance studio, swimming pool, media center, athletic field and outdoor play areas. Lower school students participate in an after school enrichment program that includes: robotics, sewing, golf, painting, arts and crafts, swimming and diving, dance, science, and piano. Westminster Academy's strong financial aid program allows many local families to take advantage of all that the school has to offer. Serving families from all socioeconomic groups, the student body of Westminster Academy is predominately Caucasian. Total minority enrollment is approximately 20%.

For 43 years, Westminster Academy has been dedicated to developing the whole child and has seen many successes. Thirty-nine percent of all fourth grade students and 49% of fifth grade students qualify for the Duke TIP Program. More than 50 students qualify for participation in the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth program. Nine students earned a place in the the top five category in the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) math competition in which 300 local students competed. The fifth grade chorus received a superior rating in a local music competition and nine students received superior ratings in the ACSI speech meet.

The lower school provides academic support for students of all ability levels. The school's student support program identifies students who are achieving below or above grade level. Students are targeted for student support by parent and teacher referrals and by analysis of standardized test scores. Students whose academic achievement is below grade level are given academic support by a full-time teacher, with the help of a full time assistant, who selects program components for each student that may include organizational skills, paraphrasing skills and reinforcement of reading, math and writing skills. Students whose achievement is above grade level take part in enrichment activities that take the core curriculum to greater depths and prepare students for the demonstration opportunities offered by academic competitions.

Westminster Academy's lower school faculty has many years of experience. With an average of over ten years of service to the school, Westminster Academy benefits from a low faculty turnover rate. One hundred percent of the teachers are state certified and participate in continuing education that is individualized to each teacher's needs.

Training students to have a heart of service to the community is an important aspect of Westminster Academy's philosophy. The lower school sponsors six major community service projects each year. Students collect canned goods for a local food bank and coins for Hope for the Homeless. Lower school students participate in a clothing drive and collect general necessities such as toiletries and snacks for the homeless. Pop tabs are collected for Ronald McDonald House and Westminster Academy's lower school students

placed sixth in collections for South Florida. Supporting America's armed forces is also important to Westminster Academy's lower school. As class projects, students write notes of encouragement and send care packages to our country's soldiers.

Immersion in scholarly excellence and service to others equips the school's students to be exceptional thinkers, learners and leaders.



## PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

A.

Westminster Academy's Lower School uses the Gesell Developmental Observation for students in PK4 and kindergarten, IOWA Test of Basic Skills for kindergarten through fifth grades and the Cognitive Abilities Test (CoGat) for first grade through fifth grade. These assessments measure developmental growth patterns along with norm-referenced academic performance in all subject areas. Also administered is the ERB, Writing Assessment Program (WrAP) which provides a norm reference measure of each student's writing progress grades three through five. The ERB WrAP is administered in the fall and ITBS standardized test is administered during the spring of each school year.

The 2012-2013 IOWA scores reveal high academic ability across the lower school student population. Students scored in the top 15% of the nation in both reading and math. Because the students in Westminster Academy's lower school are preparing for success in middle and high school, the students are held to high academic standards. Students are most successful when they are performing at the top 15% nationally. Therefore, our goal is to increase the number of students who meet this benchmark. Students who are not reaching this goal or are not maintaining adequate yearly progress (AYP) are given additional diagnostic assessments and then are provided with interventions or specialized programs to help achieve this goal. Students are closely monitored throughout the year to identify mastery, approaching mastery or critical performance.

B.

After analyzing the educational trends of this data, it is noted that students in grades kindergarten through fourth grade performed slightly better in reading than in math. All students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade demonstrated consistent progress in reading and math. Examinations of the data tables for the ITBS for the past five years revealed that students made gains in both reading and math during all five of these school years. All grade levels scored within the top 15% of both subject areas. Further analysis of ITBS in reading and math revealed the following information: when reviewing the grade level mean Scale Score of the 85th percentile of National School Norms in math and reading the school staff was able to compare and identify skills needed to increase the performance at each level. This information has helped the faculty to focus on skills to increase student performance.

Additional significant gains in reading were revealed when each class was reviewed longitudinally. The continuous use of a multi-sensory reading program Sing, Spell, Read, and Write, in grades kindergarten and grade one, has contributed to this score improvement. These gains were helped with the introduction of several new curriculum additions, Easy Grammar Systems in grades two through five and the movement of several novels to higher-grade levels. Programs such as Accelerated Reader and the integration of iPads into the lower school classrooms have also contributed to these test score gains.

After following a specific set of students progressing from kindergarten through fifth grade, there were significant increases in scores each year. The reading total class average for kindergarten during the 2008-2009 school year was 144. In first grade, the class average for reading was 170. In grade two, this same class had an average of 183, and in grade three the class average jumped to 201. Finally, in grade four, the 2013 school year the class average in reading was 219. These increases indicate the success and appropriateness of the additional materials and methodologies and the overall reading success rate of the students.

There was a slight decline in the average reading total in the third grade class from 212 in 2009-2010 to 204 in 2010-2011. Westminster Academy did experience a significant personnel change during that time. These changes may have contributed to this slight decline.

Even though the test scores were lower in math compared to reading in grades kindergarten through four, the scores were still within the top 15% and showed adequate yearly progress through the years. Noteworthy is the slightly higher math scores when compared to the reading totals in fifth grade. These gains may be due

to curricular updates that occurred during this time period. These included the addition of Math Connects, Singapore Math, Hands on Algebra and components for the Everyday Math Series to the lower school math curriculum. Each of these additions provided additional hands on applications for student use. The introduction of differentiated instruction and the use of two math series, Math Connects and Everyday Math, has contributed to significant growth between kindergarten and first grade.

When reviewing the tests results, performance trends helped identify students who would benefit from differentiated instruction.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

Upon receipt of the IOWA scores, the Westminster Academy lower school administrative team members collaboratively review and examine the results of each assessment. Class reports, individual reports and grade level reports are analyzed, and results are shared and reviewed with classroom teachers for planning purposes and instructional training for the upcoming school year. After this information is released to families, meetings are held with parents to answer questions and discuss student placement in special programs such as enrichment or academic support.

This targeted study begins the process of team review which is a continuous prescriptive initiative for every student designed to identify individual academic strengths and weaknesses. Previous school records and other pertinent information such as medical records, educational testing batteries or other assessments are considered. Team review members include the lower school principal, assistant principal, director of student support and the student's classroom teacher. For longitudinal purposes, the team also utilizes a customized database for monitoring student progress over time. The database has been continually updated and maintained since its inception during the 2007-2008 school year.

After matriculation, team review continues when in August, as preparations for a new school year begin, additional comprehensive discussions concerning individual student classroom performance, academics, and other pertinent information occur with the student's new teacher. Action steps are established for identified students who demonstrate academic strengths and weaknesses in the areas of reading, language arts and math. For student's achieving standardized test scores below the 40th percentile in the Total Reading, Total Math or Total Language Arts categories on the IOWA test, additional assessments are conducted.

From the data obtained, specific interventions and frequency of implementation are established, and the student is recommended for participation in the school's student support program, a highly individualized pull out program offered during the school day. Conferencing is completed with the teacher and family and individual service plans are developed and documented. Intervention is strategically planned and implemented by two reading and learning specialists holding certifications in Exceptional Student Education. Delivery of services is usually administered in individual or small group format. Implemented support strategies include Orton-Gillingham methodology in reading, specialized computerized software, fluency support, comprehension support, extra time for tests, writing support, Singapore Math strategies, other individualized accommodations documented on psycho-educational assessments and additional research-based methods as needed. Speech/ language and occupational therapy services are also considered. Referrals are made to outside professionals including those who provide these services to students on campus. The team also works closely with families to recommend further psycho-educational assessment as needed and local public school representatives in the Response to Intervention process. Students in grades two through five, who have achieved standardized test scores above the ninety-fifth percentile in these same subject areas on the IOWA, may exit the team review process with a recommendation for participation in the school enrichment program. The enrichment program is a pull out program offered during the school day by a certified teacher.

## **3. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

Westminster Academy's lower school is committed to professional collaboration and collegiality. Administration and faculty are encouraged to articulate what they know about teaching and learning, and

share with others. Westminster Academy actively seeks opportunities to share lessons learned with other educators. These opportunities occur in formal and informal settings.

Each year Westminster Academy hosts a collaborative meeting of local administrators where a special guest shares instructional strategies. The meeting includes a presentation of the lower school program and a school tour. Seventeen local schools were represented at last year's meeting.

Local schools, public and private, use Westminster Academy's swimming pool and staff to meet Broward County's Swim Central drowning prevention standard. Westminster Academy also offers swimming lessons and a swim club which is open to the public.

Faculty members presented a professional development workshop on classical education at a local school that was shifting their educational philosophy from traditional to classical. Participating faculty presented the history and philosophy of classical education, gave examples of how Westminster Academy has implemented elements of classical education and shared ideas on the best practices in classical education.

All members of the lower school faculty are Florida Performance Measurement System (FPMS) trained. Each summer, this training, open to other schools, is offered on our campus bringing professional educators together in a collegial environment. FPMS training ensures that teachers are aware of best teaching practices.

Under the supervision of faculty from Iowa State University, Westminster Academy faculty was taught to write a vertically aligned curriculum. This training included instruction on writing learner outcomes and assessments which has been shared with teachers and administrators from other schools.

Westminster Academy hosted Christian Schools of Florida's School Effectiveness and School Improvement Process accreditation training. The school's faculty received this training along with representatives from several schools from around the state. This allows Westminster Academy's staff to serve on accreditation committees which encourages sharing of ideas and school plans.

As a member of FISTA, Florida Independent School Technology Association, Westminster Academy meets several times each school year with representatives from other schools to collaborate and share best practices.

In order to increase safety and security at the school, Westminster Academy collaborates with seven other local schools to share ideas and effective strategies for security. Administrators, security staff and local police work together to enhance safety plans. These schools have committed to assist each other in the event of an emergency.

#### **4. Engaging Families and Community:**

Strong family and community involvement are embedded into the foundation of Westminster Academy. Community involvement is an integral part of the daily function of Westminster Academy. A commitment to serve the community is experienced by each student as they collect canned food and coins for the homeless, write letters and send supplies to soldiers, collect pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House and prepare love bags for the needy.

Parents prepare and supervise the school's annual Pumpkin Patch and Snow Day. Each October, the school enjoys the annual Pumpkin Patch. Students decorate pumpkins, enjoy a petting zoo and play fall themed games. January brings Snow Day. Florida disappears for a bit as students have marshmallow snow ball battles and play in the winter wonderland. That evening, the families gather at a local bookstore where the students share winter poems, songs and stories.

Westminster Academy hosts two separate transition luncheons for members of the local community. The first luncheon is for parents who have students transitioning from preschool to kindergarten and the second one is for parents and students who are transitioning from elementary school to middle school. Experts share

ideas on how to make these important transitions easier on both the student and parents.

The Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) sponsors Westminster Academy's annual Christmas Boutique. Vendors from across the state sell their crafts to the community. Parents and students bake homemade goods to sell at the boutique. The two-day event brings over one thousand people to the school to enjoy fellowship and Christmas shopping.

Each spring, the school teams together with Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church to sponsor an event called Spring Fever. The entire community is invited to visit the school, enjoy free bounce houses and games, an Easter egg hunt, food, live music and swim in the pool. This event truly brings the entire neighborhood together.

Westminster Academy hosts Association of Christian Schools International academic competitions. Schools from across southeastern Florida bring teams of students to the campus for friendly academic competition. These competitions are a terrific platform for the students and parents to meet and share with families from other area schools.

## **PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Curriculum:**

The lower school curriculum of Westminster Academy is aligned vertically through scope and sequence, learner outcomes and assessments that are reviewed on a regular basis and revised as necessary. Lower school grade-level teams meet monthly to review individual student and class progress. Teaching strategies are reviewed and adjustments are made as needed. This is evidenced in strong standardized test scores. Westminster Academy promotes an environment where students receive a solid academic foundation for college preparation.

Reading instruction in the lower school integrates both traditional and classical components. A strong emphasis on phonetic skills beginning with the Sing, Spell, Read and Write program is taught to ensure that students gain a solid foundation in learning to read. Classical novels are read at each grade level stressing reading to learn and offering exposure to noteworthy, traditional literature. Reading instruction focuses on skills such as comprehension, sequencing, inference and drawing conclusions.

Weekly spelling words are part of the language arts curriculum. Kindergarten and first grade students use the Sing, Spell, Read, and Write program for spelling. Second through fifth grades use the classical spelling program, The Grammar of Spelling. Writing is a daily activity as students master the eight parts of speech quickly using the Craft Plus writing curriculum. Easy Grammar Systems is used daily to provide reinforcement. The writing process is also integrated into the reading program through expository and narrative summaries.

Science is studied through interactive units and laboratory experiments. Students are increasingly challenged to develop a better understanding and a deeper appreciation for the world around them. Children are challenged to formulate questions, make observations, clarify, interpret and analyze data, draw conclusions and communicate their learning. All students explore the scientific process as they participate in the annual science fair.

Social Studies units cover all curriculum areas as students learn how the people and events of our world impact our lives. Social studies units are closely tied to the chapter books read in language arts. Each year social studies units for all grades culminate in the school's Classical Arts Festival.

Spanish is taught through grade three and Latin is studied in grades four and five. Emphasis is placed on listening and speaking skills, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary and derivatives. Authentic cultural material, activities and music are used to create interest and enthusiasm. Latin grammar, vocabulary and derivatives are studied in grades four and five.

Bible is an essential part of the curriculum in each grade. Students study the Children's Catechism and the Old and New Testaments. Each class presents a weekly chapel during the school year. Students memorize Bible verses on a weekly basis.

Art is taught in kindergarten through grade five focusing on principles of design through the use of different media.

Music and chorus emphasize ear training, rhythm, sight-reading skills, vocal techniques, proper posture, singing and acting. Fifth grade chorus students participate in a competition with several schools during the year. Orchestra offered in the fifth grade, introduces musical concepts, sight-reading and proper technique. Students in both chorus and orchestra perform at various concerts throughout the year. Students are also given the option to take piano lessons throughout the school day.

Physical education focuses on fitness through developmentally and age appropriate activities that develop creative movement, fine and gross motor skills, good sportsmanship and hand-eye coordination. Girls in kindergarten through grade five take one ballet class in addition to their physical education classes. Grade

five students have the option of participating in ballet, swimming or an additional physical education class. Grades four and five also participate in quarterly intramurals to showcase the sports skills students are learning in class.

Technology lessons focus on activities that reinforce content areas, keyboarding, word processing, graph making, PowerPoint and internet research skills.

## **2. Reading/English:**

In the area of reading/language arts students in kindergarten complete the kindergarten program by spring, moving into first grade curriculum. The Sing, Spell, Read, and Write curriculum focuses on strengthening auditory processing, phonics and listening skills. In the first grade, students focus on phonics, vocabulary, sight words and comprehension as well as the writing process. Introduction to classical literature begins in the first grade.

Classical literature, in the form of chapter books, is the mainstay of the reading curriculum. It provides rich vocabulary, examples of varied sentence structure and timeless stories. One of the highlights of the first grade year is the student recitation of Robert Louis Stevenson's poetry from *A Child's Garden of Verse*. Second grade students are introduced to a series of selections that include short stories, folk tales, biographies, informative articles, science, poetry and American history. Critical thinking skills are developed. Grammar is emphasized through the writing process and cursive writing is introduced. In the third grade, the emphasis is on reading to learn. Each week a specific skill such as author's purpose, context clues, summarizing and predicting outcomes is emphasized. Students are exposed to a minimum of four classical literature units and book reports are written. Comprehension, sequencing, drawing conclusions, study skills and using standard textbook features are emphasized in fourth grade reading/language arts instruction. Fourth grade grammar includes all eight parts of speech, punctuation, capitalization, proper word usage, composition and creative writing. Fifth grade students read novels that correspond with American historical periods within the social studies curriculum. Skills are further refined in the areas of reading, writing, vocabulary and spelling. The fifth grade differentiates reading instruction by assigning different novels for diverse learners with leveled instruction.

Students who need reading support participate in Wilson Reading Program, Great Leaps for Reading and/or the Orton-Gillingham reading program as determined by one of our student support teachers. Progress is tracked through the use of Mindplay Virtual Reading Coach, a web-enabled, self-paced, mastery-based learning and achievement intensive reading program for struggling readers. Enrichment activities include lower school spelling bees for first through fifth grades, Mindplay Virtual Reading Coach is used for advancement in vocabulary and comprehension for accelerated students, and FLRT, a web-enabled, mastery-based, fluency reading training program is also utilized as an enrichment activity. All students participate in the Accelerated Reader program.

## **3. Mathematics:**

Kindergarten students focus on basic concepts such as measurement, addition, subtraction, patterning, estimating, counting by 1's, 2's, 5's, and 10's to 100, time and money and graphing through their math curriculum, Math Connects. This curriculum was chosen because it provides a solid foundation for the youngest students utilizing a hands-on approach for many concepts.

Students in grades 1 through 5 use SRA Real Math. This program offers excellent ancillary materials and is embraced with enthusiasm by faculty. First grade students continue to expand their knowledge as new skills are introduced. Problem solving and computation are a daily focus. In the second grade, basic skills are reinforced and beginning geometry, measurement, fractions and multiplication are presented. Students in the third grade review basic facts and instruction of concepts is expanded to include decimals. In the fourth grade, place value, multiplication, division, algebra and charts and graphs are taught. Computation drills and problem solving are a daily focus. In the fifth grade higher order critical thinking is an area of emphasis. Daily drills keep basic skills sharp as students go deeper in the areas of algebra, fractions, decimals, geometry, percentages and measurement.

Teachers enhance the learning process by using many hands-on manipulatives and technology. SMART Board technology and document cameras encourage students to actively participate in the learning process. Apple iPads individualize mathematics skills in order to enhance learning. Cooperative learning encourages peer teaching and group effort. Students are challenged by the "Problem of the Day." Computer programs such as IXL reinforce the skills being taught during math class. IXL is a skills based mathematics program that challenges students to master grade level skills. It is used by all students in kindergarten through grade five. Depending on the grade level, IXL may be used as homework, extra credit work or in the classroom. Sum-Dog is another web-based program that reinforces basic math facts and may be used in school or at home.

All students have home access to school licensed software for practice and challenge. Students who require support in mathematics use Symphony Math, a web-enabled program with a visual and highly intuitive interface helping students understand at a conceptual level. Students are enriched in activities such as Singapore Math, Hands-On Equations. Students in grades 2 through 5 participate in the Continental Math League competitions.

#### **4. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Social Studies is alive at Westminster Academy. Each year the Lower School participates in the Classical Arts Festival during the second week of May. In 2013, students studied and presented "Ancient Egypt." In 2012, students studied and presented "Early America," in 2011, "The Middle Ages," and in 2010, "Ancient Greece and Rome." All classes present a multidisciplinary display of activities and projects. In 2013, the great pyramids were rebuilt, papyrus was produced, clay figures of Egyptian gods were made and after learning about tapestries, second grade students made a coat of many colors. Students dressed as young Egyptians and shared with others what life was like in Ancient Egypt. Performances and activities such as guest speakers and plays are given. In May, guest author Jenny Cote gave a presentation on Ancient Egypt and conducted writing workshops for students in third, fourth and fifth grades. Specialty teachers participate by having their classes present art displays, music and dance performances and computer-generated student authored and illustrated books and interactive media activities such as "Explore an Egyptian Tomb".

Throughout the year students study the contributions made by U.S. Presidents and great explorers. Students develop an appreciation for our country's heritage and the world through observing and celebrating holidays and festivals. Children are taught roles and responsibilities within the family unit, school, workplace, and community.

In the upper grades students study Florida history as well as United States history covering time periods from the French and Indian War, the Revolutionary War, the Civil War and World Wars I and II. Social studies lessons are reinforced through the reading of classical literature. Writing prompts correlate with social studies units. Class projects and presentations take place throughout the school year at all levels. Timelines in classrooms allow students to visualize the important people and events related to a particular period of history.

One particular example of the school's dynamic social studies curriculum is the first grade study of Robert Louis Stevenson and the Scottish culture. Students make shortbread, and a bag piper comes to school to play. Students use technology to see Stevenson's birthplace in Edinburgh and see the daily weather report for Scotland. The students learn about the famous Bell Rock Lighthouse of which Stevenson's uncle and father were engineers. This leads to the study of all other famous lighthouses, their history and geography.

#### **5. Instructional Methods:**

Differentiated instruction is integrated into all subject areas. Basic instruction is rigorous and reviewed frequently among teachers and parents as partners. Strengths and weaknesses are identified and program plans are adjusted each year to reflect the needs of all learners.

Assessments are given at the beginning and the end of the year in all subject areas. Major assessments take

place at the end of each nine week grading period to monitor student progress and to determine which students may need interventions. These assessments also show teachers where they need to spend more time or consider a different approach. Results are communicated to parents promoting cooperation between home and school.

Teachers are asked to focus on multiple intelligences when planning lessons and identifying student strengths. Learner outcomes are included in all subject area planning. The school's scope and sequence for each subject area helps maintain consistent academic progress and mastery. The curriculum builds from one grade level to the next in each subject area.

Students needing highly focused remedial intervention are released from class to receive instruction from a specialized instructor who uses specialized curriculum. Students who have participated in this program have made great progress. Most come up to grade level within a two-year intervention period. Students are also placed on web-enabled programs with embedded assessments to track achievement.

Each teacher has a full-time assistant who works with small groups or offers one to one instruction when needed. This has provided support to the instructional rigor of the lower school and enabled the faculty to truly differentiate instruction. Student computers have grade appropriate software that offers student remediation and enhancement. Parents are provided with links so that students can practice important skills at home. Teachers can reserve blocks of time in the lower school computer lab to reinforce concepts taught in class. Students are assigned work on particular programs and can work at their own pace, at their own level.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Westminster Academy is committed to review, reflection and improvement. All faculty members at Westminster Academy are involved in professional development activities. Each year, five professional days plus monthly meetings are set aside for professional growth opportunities. Each faculty member in cooperation with department heads, grade level leaders and the principal prepares an annual written plan for professional growth. Plans have included technology seminars, curriculum writing, SMART Board training, differentiated learning, brain-based learning, mentoring other faculty members and accreditation training.

Several teachers attended the Dare to Dream Response to Intervention (RTi) Symposium to grasp a better understanding of the tiers of differentiation. As a component of RTI, one teacher at each grade level received Mindplay Virtual Reading Coach and Symphony Math training. These teachers then offered instruction in the same to teachers and assistants.

Early childhood teachers have been trained by the Gesell Institute to administer the Gesell Development Assessment. In addition to in-house professional development teachers are also encouraged to attend seminars and conferences. All lower school administrators and several faculty members have been trained by AdvancEd and Middle States, and all lower school faculty members have been trained by Christian Schools of Florida to serve on accreditation teams.

Teachers have received iPad training in order to enhance curriculum and best utilize the technology resources of the school.

New professional development activities and programs are considered each year to help our faculty remain current with best educational practices and to integrate technology into the classroom. With our sister ministry, Knox Seminary, we are also able to offer our faculty a masters program in 'Christ and Culture' to further assist them in the process of integrating Scripture into the curriculum and preparing students for contemporary culture.

Westminster Academy's emphasis on professional development in the area of curriculum provides direct benefit to our students by providing them with a cohesive curriculum that meets or exceeds state and national standards. Continuous professional development opportunities in the area of technology translates



to classrooms where teachers employ technology well because they are comfortable and confident with it. This, in turn, provides our students with an exciting learning environment that is current and relevant.

## **7. School Leadership**

The leadership style valued at Westminster Academy is one of shared decision making. The headmaster, as leader of the school, is supported by the leadership team. Each of the school's key areas is represented on the leadership team. As the headmaster guides the leadership team, the lower school principal guides the faculty and staff of the lower school to make decisions that make it possible for students to excel with their gifts and talents in academics, fine arts, athletics, spiritual and character development, service to others and student life programs.

Lower school, department heads serve three grade levels. Within each grade level there is a team chair. Department heads meet each month and grade level teams meet each week. The lower school principal has an open door policy and meets with faculty and staff on a regular basis. Teacher assistants meet with the principal monthly. The principal encourages sharing and collaboration and reviews lesson plans on a weekly basis, guides instructional programs and mentors teachers. With a finger on the pulse of all that goes on in the lower school, the lower school principal makes sure that daily classroom activity is aligned with national and state standards.

Parent involvement is a vital part of Westminster Academy's lower school. Parents are asked to attend field trips, organize special events, assist with fundraising and be a presence in the classroom as helpers. Lower school leadership encourages parent involvement and works to provide opportunities for parent involvement. A strong family atmosphere is a lower school priority.

The lower school principal leads faculty and staff by encouraging them and reminding them of their value. Each holiday season, the lower school faculty room is transformed into a holiday café complete with decorations, music and a catered lunch. Faculty and staff enjoy a delicious meal and a time of fellowship. The principal makes a point of placing encouraging notes in teacher mailboxes throughout the year and sharing successes of individuals with faculty and staff.

## PART VI - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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*The purpose of this addendum is to obtain additional information from non-public schools as noted below.*

1. Non-public school association(s): Christian

Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. Select the primary association first.

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)) status?      Yes X      No
3. What are the 2013-2014 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

### 2013-2014 Tuition

Grade	Amount
K	\$8915
1	\$9764
2	\$10516
3	\$10619
4	\$10661
5	\$10661
6	\$0
7	\$0
8	\$0
9	\$0
10	\$0
11	\$0
12	\$0

4. What is the educational cost per student?      \$11699  
(School budget divided by enrollment)
5. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$2677
6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?      26%
7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?      34%

## PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>ITBS</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>3</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2001</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Riverside</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	198.2	196	199.9	210.8	206.7
Number of students tested	38	42	39	28	36
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

### NOTES:

## REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>ITBS</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>4</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2001</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Riverside</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	214.7	220.6	227.4	221.1	230.5
Number of students tested	48	40	40	34	51
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

### NOTES:

## REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>ITBS</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>5</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2001</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Riverside</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	239.3	235.1	237.6	241.3	244.5
Number of students tested	50	29	32	58	54
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

### NOTES:

## REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>ITBS</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>3</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2001</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Riverside</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	199.7	201	203.9	211.9	207.9
Number of students tested	38	42	39	28	36
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

### NOTES:

## REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>ITBS</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>4</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2001</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Riverside</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	218.7	220.9	231.9	224.1	229.6
Number of students tested	48	40	40	34	51
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

### NOTES:

## REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>ITBS</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>5</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2001</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Riverside</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	235.7	241.5	237.6	239.5	247.3
Number of students tested	49	29	32	58	53
Percent of total students tested	98	100	100	100	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

### NOTES: